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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/627,313	07/24/2003	Philip E. Eggers	A-3-4	1924

21394 7590 08/03/2005  
ARTHROCARE CORPORATION  
680 VAQUEROS AVENUE  
SUNNYVALE, CA 94085-3523

EXAMINER
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STIGELL, THEODORE J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3763

DATE MAILED: 08/03/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/627,313

Applicant(s)

EGGERS ET AL.

Examiner

Theodore J. Stigell

Art Unit

3763

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 July 2005.  
2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.  
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 54-66 is/are pending in the application.  
4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.  
5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.  
6) ☒ Claim(s) 54-66 is/are rejected.  
7) ☒ Claim(s) 56 is/are objected to.  
8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.  
10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 24 July 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).  
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:  
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.  
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.  
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)  
6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments, see The Rejection of Claims under 35 USC 102(b), filed 7/7/2005, with respect to the rejection(s) of claim(s) 54-56 and 65-66 under USC 102(b) have been fully considered and are persuasive. Therefore, the rejection has been withdrawn. However, upon further consideration, a new ground(s) of rejection is made in view of Bales et al (4,682,596).

### ***Claim Objections - 35 USC § 112***

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 56 recites the limitation "the return electrode" in the first line. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. There is no prior recitation of the return electrode in the independent claim 54.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 54-56, 59, 61-64 and 65-66 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bales et al. (4,682,596). See Figure 3 and the respective portions of the specification. Bales et al. teach a surgical instrument for applying high-frequency electrical energy to tissue at a target site comprising a shaft (84), a hemispherical-

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shaped electrode terminal (86), an annular return electrode (90) spaced proximally from the hemispherical-shaped electrode, a connector (94,92) extending from the electrode terminal to the proximal end of the shaft and a non-electrically conducting electrode support (88) that can be made of either ceramic or glass (See Column 7, lines 10-16).

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 60 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bales et al. (4,682,596). Bales et al. discloses the invention as substantially claimed. Bales et al. do not disclose the surface area of the tissue treatment surface. However, these parameters are deemed matters of design choice, well within the skill of the ordinary artisan, obtained through routine experimentation in determining optimum results.

Claims 57-58 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bales et al. (4,682,596) in view of Herczog et al. (GB 2037167). Bales et al. teach all of the limitations of the claims except for explicitly reciting that the shaft has a bent configuration. Herczog et al. teach a bent configuration in the distal portion of the shaft. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time of invention, to modify the shaft of Bales et al. with the bent configuration taught by Herczog et al. for the well known purpose of providing for a transverse treatment location for structures parallel to the device.

***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Theodore J. Stigell whose telephone number is 571-272-8759. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Nicholas Lucchesi can be reached on 571-272-4977. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

TS



NICHOLAS D. LUCCHESI  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3700